UNITED
NATIONS

A

General Assembly

Distr.
GENERAL

A/50/370
6 September 1995

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

Fiftieth session
Item 107 of the provisional agenda*

SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT, INCLUDING QUESTIONS RELATING TO THE WORLD SOCIAL SITUATION AND TO YOUTH, AGEING, DISABLED PERSONS AND THE FAMILY

Observance of the International Year of the Family

Report of the Secretary-General

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I. INTRODUCTION

1. The International Year of the Family was observed in 1994, pursuant to General Assembly resolution 44/82 of 8 December 1989 and its subsequent resolutions 45/133 of 14 December 1990, 46/92 of 16 December 1991 and 47/237 of 20 September 1993. In its resolution 47/237, the Assembly requested the Secretary-General to report to it, at its fiftieth session, on the observance of the Year at the national, regional and international levels, and to submit specific proposals on the follow-up to the Year, including a draft plan of action, if deemed appropriate.

2. The present report is submitted pursuant to that request. It also responds to the reporting required on the activities for an international year, in accordance with General Assembly decision 35/424 of 5 December 1980 and Economic and Social Council resolution 1980/67 of 25 July 1980 on guidelines for international years and anniversaries. The report provides a brief global overview of the most significant aspects of the Year's observance and contains specific proposals on its follow-up. It is beyond the scope of this report even to list fully the broad array of activities undertaken at different levels. Supplementary information can be found in a series of documentation on the Year. In particular, attention is drawn to the Secretary-General's earlier reports on the Year (A/46/362, A/48/293 and E/CN.5/1993/3).

II. CONCLUSIONS

3. The International Year of the Family was observed at an important juncture in the history of the United Nations, on the eve of its fiftieth anniversary, and formed an integral element of a process of refining the concepts and mechanisms of development and social progress. The observance of the Year served to highlight the role of families as basic social units and the need to pay adequate attention to the family dimensions in development efforts.

4. The Year's observance has resulted in a significant record of accomplishment. These include, among others: achieving the Year's immediate goal of increasing awareness of family issues; advancing the subject-matter of families in the context of development and in related international dialogue; an evolution and maturation of an approach to the family as an object and agent of social policy in many countries and internationally; increased recognition of the importance of supporting families and of bringing about positive changes in the family realm as an integral part of efforts to achieve peace, human rights, democracy, sustainable development and social progress; an ever growing conviction that it is in the best interests of individuals and societies to promote democratic families and family-friendly societies; a myriad of new initiatives and long-term activities in support of families all over the world, particularly at the local and national levels; the development or strengthening of mechanisms devoted to family policy and research; the mobilization of a global network of partners; and the recognition that, despite the diversity of families, many key issues relating to families are common across countries and regions, and that international cooperation on family issues is valuable.

5. The success of the Year has been achieved, in particular, through a persistent effort to focus activities at the national and local levels, supported by selected regional and international measures. Also essential has been the consistent promotion of a functional approach to families. A most basic factor has been the extensive, and mutually reinforcing and complementary, efforts of the numerous partners of the Year, as exemplified by 157 Member States, 34 organizations and specialized agencies of the United Nations, several intergovernmental and hundreds of non-governmental organizations, research and academic institutions, the private sector and families themselves.

6. The concerted effort to promote the substantive goals, as approved by the General Assembly, was crucial. It resulted in broad support for the Year. Subsequently, the Year has been a valuable instrument not only for promoting support for families as basic social units, but also for advancing human rights within the family, equal rights and responsibilities of individual members of families, gender equality, the role of the father, and protection and development of children. It generated greater understanding of the situation of families and, at the same time, increased sensitivity to problems within families, including gender and generational inequalities, distribution of resources and violations of human rights. A recurrent conclusion of the Year has been the need for universal ratification and effective implementation of related basic instruments, such as the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

7. Other overriding priority issues identified by the processes of the Year included supporting the societal functions of families, particularly with respect to nurturing and care, socialization, transmission of values and culture, social integration, education, health and living conditions; the negative impact of poverty and unemployment; family life education; domestic violence; reconciling work and family responsibilities; families as units of production and consumption as well as agents of environmental protection; assistance to families in need, including single-parent families, especially those headed by women, refugee families and families in conditions of war; legislation concerning families; and national capacities to address family issues, including research and policy development.

8. The Year increased the understanding of the interrelationship of families to society, including their role as providers and consumers of services and agents of development. It underscored the need for the formulation of appropriate and timely policies. A major outcome of the Year, with a potentially lasting impact, is the greater awareness of the extent and ways in which policy decisions affect families and the value of a family-sensitive perspective in policy development and implementation. Numerous corresponding measures have already been initiated at all levels.

9. As a major phase in a long-term process of supporting families, the Year has succeeded in meeting its basic objectives. Its achievements should be built upon through long-term action, including effective follow-up at all levels. Specific proposals in this regard are contained in section XVI below.

III. BACKGROUND AND OPERATIONAL MODALITIES

10. Whereas families had long been recognized as basic units of societies in various international conventions and declarations, family issues have become the object of increasing attention in the United Nations since the early 1980s. The newly adopted international plans and programmes of action in the social policy and development area called for increased attention to family dimensions. Since its twenty-eighth session in 1983, the Commission for Social Development and, subsequently, the Economic and Social Council regularly considered family issues and adopted several resolutions on the subject, which, inter alia, called for enhancing awareness among decision makers and the public of family issues and ways of addressing them.

11. The General Conference of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), at its twenty-fourth session in 1987, adopted a resolution in which it approved the principle of proclaiming an international year of the family. The Interregional Consultation on Developmental Social Welfare Policies and Programmes, convened by the United Nations in 1987, covered family issues extensively and stressed the importance of addressing them adequately. Throughout the 1980s, an increasingly large number of Member States and non-governmental organizations began to focus attention on the family and called for the proclamation of an international year of the family.

12. Consequently, at its forty-second and forty-third sessions, the General Assembly adopted resolutions 42/134 and 43/135 of 7 December 1987 and 8 December 1988, respectively, entitled "Need to enhance international cooperation in the field of protection and assistance to the family". Having considered the Secretary-General's reports (A/43/570 and A/44/407) mandated by those resolutions, the Assembly, on 8 December 1989, adopted resolution 44/82, in which it proclaimed 1994 as the International Year of the Family, with the theme: "Family: resources and responsibilities in a changing world".

13. In that resolution, the General Assembly decided that the major activities for the observance of the Year should be concentrated at the local, regional and national levels and assisted by the United Nations and its system of organizations, with a view to creating among Governments, policy makers and the public a greater awareness of the family as the natural and fundamental unit of society. It also endorsed the main recommendations, objectives and principles for the observance of the Year, as contained in the Secretary-General's report (A/44/407). Accordingly, the Year's objective has been to stimulate local, national and international actions to: increase awareness, understanding and knowledge of family issues and processes affecting families; focus attention upon the rights and responsibilities of family members; strengthen national institutions and stimulate efforts to address family issues; enhance the effectiveness of relevant local, regional and national efforts; improve national and international collaboration; and build upon the results of various international activities.

14. The principles established to guide the Year's preparation and observance stipulated that the family constitutes the basic unit of society and therefore warrants special attention; that families assume diverse forms and functions among and within countries; that the Year should seek to promote the basic human

rights and fundamental freedoms of individuals; that it should foster equality between women and men within families and bring about fuller sharing of domestic responsibilities and employment opportunities; that it should give expression to an integrated perspective of families, their members, community and society; and that it should constitute an event within a continuing process.

15. The General Assembly designated the Commission for Social Development as the preparatory body and the Economic and Social Council as the coordinating body for the Year.

IV. ACTION BY INTERGOVERNMENTAL BODIES

A. General Assembly

16. Review of the preparatory process. Subsequent to the proclamation of the International Year of the Family, the General Assembly continued its consideration of the Year's preparations and observance at its forty-fifth, forty-sixth and forty-seventh sessions and adopted resolutions 45/133, 46/92 and 47/237, respectively.

17. Official launching of the Year. One plenary meeting at the forty-eighth session of the General Assembly, on 7 December 1993, was devoted to a formal launching of the Year, in accordance with Assembly resolution 47/237. The meeting was addressed by the President of the Assembly, the Secretary-General and a representative of the host country, as well as by representatives of the countries that hosted the four regional preparatory meetings for the Year. A brief segment for non-governmental organizations was also held.

18. International Conference on Families. In its resolution 47/237, the General Assembly further decided to devote two plenary meetings at its forty-ninth session, in 1994, to the implementation of the follow-up to the Year and to designate those meetings as an international conference on families, which should take place at an appropriate global policy-making level. Pursuant to that decision, the Assembly met on 18 and 19 October 1994, in four plenary meetings, as an International Conference on Families. Following statements by the President of the General Assembly and the Secretary-General, 45 delegations took the floor, including those who spoke on behalf of the European Union, the Nordic countries and the Group of Latin American and Caribbean States. Twenty of these delegations were represented at the ministerial level or equivalent. A brief segment for non-governmental organizations also took place as part of the Conference. The Conference marked the first time that the General Assembly devoted its plenary meetings exclusively to a discussion of the topic of families. A brief summary of its discussions is contained in a note by the Secretary-General. 1/

B. Economic and Social Council

19. At its regular sessions of 1991, 1993 and 1995, the Economic and Social Council, the coordinating body for the Year, reviewed the recommendations of the preparatory body and approved its draft resolutions.

C. Commission for Social Development

20. The Commission for Social Development, the preparatory body for the Year, reviewed the Year's preparation, observance and follow-up at its thirty-second, thirty-third and thirty-fourth sessions. At its thirty-second session, it examined a draft programme for the preparation and observance of the Year, contained in the report of the Secretary-General, 2/ and recommended to the General Assembly, through the Economic and Social Council, the adoption of draft resolution III. At its thirty-third session, it reviewed the state of preparations for the Year, on the basis of the report of the Secretary-General, 3/ and recommended to the General Assembly, through the Economic and Social Council, the adoption of draft resolution VI. At its thirty-fourth session, it considered the note of the Secretary-General on the current status of implementation of Assembly resolution 47/237 on the Year 4/ and adopted resolution 34/3, entitled "Follow-up to the International Year of the Family".

D. Commission on the Status of Women

21. The Commission on the Status of Women, at its thirty-sixth session, adopted resolution 36/1, entitled "Advancement of women and the family", in which it recommended to the Commission for Social Development that it take account of a number of elements when preparing for the Year. Pursuant to the request of the General Assembly contained in its resolution 46/92, the text of draft resolution VI of the Commission for Social Development, entitled "International Year of the Family", was made available to the Commission on the Status of Women at its thirty-seventh session.

E. Human Rights Committee

22. At its thirty-ninth session, in 1990, the Human Rights Committee adopted general comment 19 (39), relating to article 23 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. Article 23 of the Covenant recognizes that the family is the natural and fundamental group unit of society and is entitled to protection by society and the State. In its general comment, the Committee noted, inter alia, that the concept of the family might differ in some respects from State to State, and even from region to region within a State, and that it was therefore not possible to give the concept a standard definition. The Committee emphasized, however, that when a group of persons was regarded as a family under the legislation and practice of a State, it must be given the protection referred to in article 23.

F. Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women

23. The Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women considered the International Year of the Family at its eleventh to thirteenth sessions. At its twelfth session, the Committee was briefed by the Coordinator for the Year. Pursuant to its earlier decision that its contribution to the Year would be a general recommendation on article 16 and related articles 9 and 15 of the

Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, the Committee, at its thirteenth session, adopted General Recommendation No. 21 on equality in marriage and family relations.

G. Committee on the Rights of the Child

24. At its seventh session, in 1994, the Committee on the Rights of the Child held a general discussion on the role of the family in the promotion of the rights of the child. The Coordinator for the Year addressed the Committee.

H. Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific

25. At its forty-seventh session, in 1991, the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) adopted resolution 47/13, entitled "International Year of the Family". The Commission urged all members and associate members to take prompt action to establish national coordinating mechanisms for the Year, and requested the Executive Secretary of the Commission to undertake several specific measures, including the convening of a regional intergovernmental preparatory meeting and the initiation of a series of country studies on the role of the family in development.

I. Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia

26. At its sixteenth session, in 1992, the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) adopted resolution 189 (XVI), entitled "Preparation for the International Year of the Family". The Commission appealed to its member States to exert all possible efforts to promote awareness of the role of the family as a fundamental unit of society in furthering economic and social development in the region.

J. World Health Assembly

27. The World Health Assembly, at its forty-sixth session, adopted a resolution on the International Year of the Family, in which it urged all Member States to give effect to the objectives of the Year in the health sector and urged the Director-General of the World Health Organization to take several specific measures.

V. RELEVANT INTERGOVERNMENTAL CONFERENCES

28. The observance of the Year coincided with, and formed part of, a process of refining the basic concepts of development. The global conferences of the 1990s provided vital conceptual and policy direction in this regard. Peace, economy, the environment, social justice and democracy are now viewed as integral components of development. At their centre is the human person. Families, as agents and beneficiaries of development, and as basic social units capable of promoting democratic, just and stable societies, provide for a human-centred

link among the various elements of development, particularly in its social dimension. The International Year of the Family served to highlight this important social component of the global initiatives in pursuit of people-centred sustainable development. Its preparations and observances were guided by that perspective. Conversely, family issues were extensively covered by the global conferences and the agendas, plans and programmes of action emanating from them.

A. World Summit for Children

29. The World Summit for Children adopted the World Declaration on the Survival, Protection and Development of Children and the Plan of Action for implementing the Declaration in the 1990s. The Declaration and the Plan of Action enunciate the importance of the family as the fundamental group of society and the natural environment for the growth and well-being of all its members, particularly children. The Declaration calls for protection and assistance to families, and giving children the chance to find their identity and realize their worth in a safe and supportive environment, through families and other care-givers committed to their welfare. The Plan of Action recognizes that the family has the primary responsibility for the nurturing and protection of children from infancy to adolescence, and that introduction of children to the culture, values and norms of their society begins in the family. It calls for respect and support for the efforts of parents and other care-givers to nurture and care for children in a family environment. It further encourages families to play an active role in support of the goals of the Plan of Action and calls for the marshalling of all forms of social mobilization to convey to all families the knowledge and skills required for improving the situation of children.

B. United Nations Conference on Environment and Development

30. The United Nations Conference on Environment and Development served notice that environment permeates all aspects of development; that for sustainable development to succeed, it must become the concern and commitment of all segments of society, including families; and that in order to secure the future of the planet, all actors, including households, must change the way they behave. In addressing unsustainable patterns of consumption, Agenda 21, adopted by the Conference, stressed the role of households as consumers. In the context of addressing demographic dynamics and sustainability, it made a number of proposals relating to family welfare, family credit schemes, the responsible planning of family size and responsible parenthood.

C. World Conference on Human Rights

31. The World Conference on Human Rights and the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action adopted by the Conference stress the need to ensure the protection of individual's rights in the context of family relationships and to address discrimination, the denial of equal rights of family members, particularly women, domestic violence and abuse or neglect of children. The

Conference also pointed out the positive role that families could play in promoting respect for and the learning and exercise of basic human rights, and thereby the actual enjoyment of those rights.

D. International Conference on Population and Development

32. The International Conference on Population and Development addressed family issues extensively. Principle 9 of the Programme of Action adopted by the Conference states that: "The family is the basic unit of society and as such should be strengthened. It is entitled to receive comprehensive protection and support. In different cultural, political and social systems, various forms of the family exist. Marriage must be entered into with the free consent of the intending spouses, and husband and wife should be equal partners." 5/

33. The Programme contains a chapter on "The family, its roles, rights, composition and structure", wherein objectives and actions are identified regarding the diversity of family structure and composition, and socio-economic support to the family. The objectives are: to develop policies and laws that better support the family, contribute to its stability and take into account its plurality of forms, particularly the growing number of single-parent families; to establish social security measures that address the social, cultural and economic factors behind the increasing costs of child-rearing; to promote equality of opportunity for family members, especially the rights of women and children in the family; and to ensure that all social and economic development policies are fully responsive to the diverse and changing needs and the rights of families and their individual members, and provide necessary support and protection, particularly to the most vulnerable families and the most vulnerable family members. Several actions are recommended to achieve these objectives.

34. The Programme's chapter on "Gender equality, equity and empowerment of women" identifies objectives and actions of direct relevance to the family, such as those related to improving women's access to employment and educational opportunities, eliminating discriminatory practices against women, enabling women to combine the roles of child bearing, breast-feeding and child rearing with participation in the workforce, eliminating violence against women, equal treatment of girls and boys, equal participation of women and men in all areas of family and household responsibilities, men's shared responsibility and active involvement in responsible parenthood, and child-support laws.

E. World Summit for Social Development

35. Family issues were addressed by the World Summit for Social Development and are incorporated in the Copenhagen Declaration and the Programme of Action, 6/ adopted by the Summit.

36. The Copenhagen Declaration on Social Development acknowledges that "societies must respond more effectively to the material and spiritual needs of individuals, their families and the communities in which they live". It states that "the goals and objectives of social development require continuous efforts to reduce and eliminate major sources of social distress and instability for the

family and for society". The Declaration's principles and goals "recognize the family as the basic unit of society and acknowledge that it plays a key role in social development and as such should be strengthened, with attention to the rights, capabilities and responsibilities of its members. In different cultural, political and social systems various forms of family exist. It is entitled to receive comprehensive protection and support". In commitment 4 of the Declaration, Summit participants resolved to "strengthen institutions that enhance social integration, recognizing the central role of the family and providing it with an environment that assures its protection and support". In commitment 5 they resolved to "promote changes in attitudes, structures, policies, laws and practices in order to eliminate all obstacles to human dignity, equality and equity in the family and in society," and "promote equal partnership between women and men in family and community life and society, emphasize the shared responsibility of men and women in the care of children and support for older family members, and emphasize men's shared responsibility and promote their active involvement in responsible parenthood and responsible sexual and reproductive behaviour". 7/

37. In accordance with the principles, goals and commitments of the Copenhagen Declaration as well as those of the International Conference on Population and Development, the Programme of Action of the World Summit for Social Development contains numerous specific elements regarding the family, as they relate, inter alia, to promoting an enabling environment based on a people-centred approach to sustainable development, eradication of poverty, expansion of productive employment and the reduction of unemployment, and social integration. In particular, social integration should involve encouraging social and economic policies that are designed to meet the needs of families and their individual members, especially the most disadvantaged and vulnerable members, with particular attention to the care of children; ensuring opportunities for family members to understand and meet their social responsibilities; promoting mutual respect, tolerance and cooperation within the family and within society; and promoting equal partnership between women and men in the family.

F. Fourth World Conference on Women: Action for Equality, Development and Peace

38. The draft Platform of Action considered by the Commission on the Status of Women for transmission to the Fourth World Conference on Women reflected family aspects as they relate to gender perspectives in people-oriented development and advancement of women. The draft Platform defined five strategic goals to deal with critical areas of concern. One of the key goals is to "inspire a new generation of women and men working together for equality". Other areas of concern are the growing burden of poverty on women, inequality in access to education and health, violence against women, effects of armed conflicts on women, inequality in access to economic structures and resources and decision-making processes at all levels, women's human rights, stereotyping of women in the mass media, and women and the environment. All these areas have special relevance to equality in the family.

G. Second United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II)

39. Two main themes identified by the preparatory process for the Second United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II) are adequate shelter for all and sustainable human settlements in an urbanizing world. These are crucial to the situation of families. It is expected that the global plan of action to be adopted by the Conference will contain specific provisions relating to families. Also, the informal drafting group has proposed that the statement of principles should make specific reference to families.

VI. ACTION AT THE NATIONAL LEVEL

40. Measures were taken in 157 countries for the observance of the Year, according to the latest information available to the secretariat for the Year.

41. In order to promote effective national action, three specific organizational measures were suggested to Governments: designating a national focal point; establishing a national coordination mechanism; and formulating a national programme of action to observe the Year. In most of the countries that took action for the Year, all three suggested organizational measures were taken, while others undertook the Year's observances within the context of relevant existing policies and programmes.

42. The extensive and varying measures taken have been described in the two editions of the Inventory of National Action. Pertinent information is also contained in the Secretary-General's earlier reports on the Year (A/46/362, A/48/293 and E/CN.5/1993/3). A brief analysis is presented below of the salient features of national action, centred around the three major organizational measures undertaken, the national priorities identified and corresponding programme and policy initiatives to address them, as well as a preliminary assessment of the impact of the Year.

43. The national focal points for the Year served as an invaluable conduit for information and inquiries, facilitated contact with the secretariat for the Year, performed diverse other functions and served as members of national coordination mechanisms. In particular, in the early phases of the preparations for the Year, they functioned as an important medium for information sharing and for establishing arrangements at the national level.

44. National coordination mechanisms for the Year were mostly established by the Head of State or Government, or through parliamentary action. In many instances they were headed by or under the patronage of the Head of State or Government, or the first lady of the country; were established at the senior governmental level; and often involved several national ministries, with the ministry or authority devoted to family issues, where it existed, usually assuming the lead role. They generally enjoyed the active participation and support of non-governmental organizations, research institutions, the academic community, the private sector, religious groups, the media and prominent personalities. Country/regional offices of the organizations and agencies of the United Nations system were also often requested to participate. In some

countries, the coordination mechanism had a two-tiered structure consisting of a higher-level honorary committee, broadly representative of the society, and a working-level committee for implementation. In many instances national coordinating bodies established working groups on sectoral issues or programmatic priorities. In several countries, coordination structures were also set up at sub-national levels. Local authorities undertook activities at the community and municipal levels, thus extending the network of coordinating structures.

45. The functions of national mechanisms routinely involved elaborating and implementing a national plan; disseminating information; achieving the involvement of all sectors of the society; undertaking measures to raise public awareness of family issues and promoting appreciation of the role of families; and identifying priority issues and concrete actions. In several instances their functions have been prolonged beyond the Year and institutionalized, as either special ministries or similar bodies.

46. National plans or programmes for the observance of the Year usually included the following main features: (a) a research component, involving activities such as specific studies, surveys, national reports, special publications, expert meetings, funding for research, publicizing existing research resources and refinement of data in official statistics; (b) a legislative component, involving review, reform and enactment of legislation; publicizing provisions related to families; and special parliamentary and other debates; (c) support for local initiatives through facilitative services; (d) specific measures for special needs groups, such as information materials in Braille and audiotape form or in minority languages; (e) a private-sector component, involving resource mobilization; publicizing existing corporate policies benefiting families; promoting policy-building on issues relating to family and work; promoting corporate plans for observance of the Year; and use of private-sector information services to disseminate information; (f) public education components; (g) promotional and awareness-raising components, incorporating numerous elements such as extensive activities to observe the International Day of Families, posters and information material based on the logo of the Year, campaign mottos or themes, special media events, concerts, sporting competitions, observances of family days or weeks, special postage stamps, commemorative coins, publications, contests, artistic exhibits and competitions, folkloric demonstrations, support of public figures or celebrities, special theme songs, including the official theme song for the Year, public announcements from the Head of State or Government, and opening and closing events for the Year; (h) professional development aspects, often geared to groups with a direct helping role for families; and (i) a policy component, involving policy reviews, publicizing existing policies and programmes, establishing mechanisms for greater inter-sectoral collaboration, identification of policy "gaps", adoption of new policies, bilateral assistance and international sharing of experiences on policy issues, etc.

47. National priorities established for the Year included those associated with: employment of family members; reconciliation of work and family responsibilities; family, maternity and paternity leave; domestic violence; gender equality in families and before the law; demographic change; displaced persons and refugees; family reunification; migration; poverty; child care;

family-based foster care; adoption; street children; children's rights in the family and in society; exploitation of children; breast-feeding, maternal and child health and mortality; fertility; abortion; adolescent pregnancy; family life education; responsible parenthood; parenting skills; the role of men in families and the role of fathers; the girl child; impact and use of media; numerous issues related to marriage and divorce; families as sources of joy, security, love and caring; changing family forms, notably the growing number of single-parent female-headed households; disability; socialization and social integration of youth; intergenerational relations and issues; rights and responsibilities of and in families; education within and supported by families; democracy and tolerance; literacy, particularly of women; immunization and preventative public health; family health care; nutrition; safe water supply; housing and shelter issues; unpaid domestic work; rural families; families as micro-support units; rural development and subsistence agriculture; family-based enterprise; consumption practices; erosion of family ties and weakening of familial support systems; ethics and moral education in families; transmission of values, culture and traditions; juvenile crime; prisoners; drug abuse; HIV/AIDS prevention and care; social security; environmental protection; recreation; families in transitional economies; large families; issues related to multicultural and multilingual families; ethnic minority families; families in conditions of war; etc.

48. Approaches to address these priority issues included correspondingly diverse programme initiatives: introduction of income supports, such as parenting allowance and home child-care allowance; tax and credit reliefs; elaboration of training courses for families or family members on a broad range of issues; family mediation services; numerous initiatives concerning balancing work and family responsibilities; employee assistance programmes and parental leave schemes; counselling centres and employment agencies; integrated professional centres providing comprehensive services to multiple-need, at-risk families; outreach programmes, including decentralization of services for families; support for preschool children of low-income families; early-intervention programmes for child health, domestic violence and other issues; national prevention strategies for child abuse and neglect; crisis centres for victims of domestic violence; establishment of schools, housing facilities, feeding programmes and other services for street children and abandoned children; training and support programmes for family-based carers; family reunification programmes for displaced, refugee or migrating persons; training of health-care professionals; food and medicine distribution programmes; prenatal nutrition programmes; introduction of family studies in the school curriculum; teacher sensitization training; programmes to promote educational roles of parents; early childhood and family education programmes; family court systems; family consultation and other services in criminal justice systems; training programmes for juvenile court judges; funding programmes for community-based projects and services for families; construction of housing units; low-income housing strategies; initiatives to strengthen families as units of production and self-sufficiency; programmes for substance-abusing parents and others dealing with addicts and their families; parenting skills projects and services; etc. Most of these initiatives have been intended to become part of ongoing programmes.

49. Attention was also focused on policy issues as they related to families in the national context and resulted in a broad array of policy initiatives. These included or addressed: large-scale decentralization initiatives, introducing new frameworks for policy development and implementation; entitlements and leave provisions enabling parents to be more active in children's education; mechanisms to permit a fuller reconciliation of employment and family responsibilities; incentives for the greater involvement of men in domestic responsibilities; mechanisms and responsibilities for the protection of children in families; support for families with children; national plans to eradicate domestic violence; efforts to eliminate occupational and income discrimination against women; paternity, maternity and family leave policies; numerous tax-system based provisions or reforms; removing gender bias from policies dealing with family issues; gender equality in respect of marital property and responsibilities in alimony; building mediation processes into formal divorce proceedings; inclusion of a family focus in small enterprise development strategies; establishing equality or equity between different family types, notably in respect of access to programmes, benefits and services; programmes that increase and foster the self-sufficiency of families and their capacity to contribute to personal development and to communities; affirmative action programmes for vulnerable family members or families in need, such as single-parent families; assistance programmes for families in poverty; etc.

50. In several countries, an outcome of the Year was the development of policy discussion papers and specific recommendations for consideration by national Governments. Many new policy developments or refinements included an assessment of policies for their congruence with internationally adopted standards or initiatives. Policy recognition and support of families was also introduced or strengthened in existing broad national strategies, such as multi-year development plans.

51. In many countries the Year was seen as an opportunity to update, refine or develop legislation concerning families and on a broad spectrum of family-related priority issues. In particular, it served as an occasion to identify legislative and other measures required to implement international conventions, notably the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women.

52. The Year had an important impact on the structure and functioning of institutions whose work related to families, by serving as an opportunity to set up or strengthen them and establish or expand services. These included national research institutions devoted to family issues; national observatories on family policies; ministries with a mandate for a new or existing family policy; and working groups or special task forces on family issues.

53. National measures for the observance of the Year also contained provisions for international cooperation and experience sharing. This included bilateral cooperation and development assistance as well as national initiatives to promote regional and international cooperation on family issues, some of which are listed in section VII below. Proposals have also been made for a centre on family studies, by the Republic of Korea; and for observatories on family policy issues in the Mediterranean, by Malta, and in the Maghreb, by Tunisia.

54. National measures for the Year have been successful in raising public awareness of family issues, including increased knowledge of the economic, social, demographic, cultural and other factors affecting families and their members. Major factors that contributed to this outcome included: explicit recognition of awareness-raising as a national goal for the Year; broad dissemination of information; promotion of research on family issues; concerted efforts to focus on key issues that were identified through public discussions, which were complementary to national development objectives; a process of extensive consultations; and intensive involvement and interest at the grass-roots level in the underlying substantive issues and their relevance to diverse professional and other groups. Several countries reported hundreds of events, projects and initiatives, with broad popular participation.

55. Among the most common concerns addressed in the context of the Year was the relationship between work and family life. The double burden of domestic and paid work by women was a major issue. In developed countries, emphasis was placed on the roles and responsibilities of employers in achieving a balance between work and family life, as well as on the role of men, particularly fathers, in family responsibilities and domestic work. Promoting gender equality in society and in family life was another common basic concern. Related specific issues included the situation of the girl child; access of women to education, training and services; property rights; domestic violence; women's legal protection concerning marriage and divorce; and increasing numbers of single-parent families headed by women. The need for continuing efforts to promote gender equality in families and the role that families can play in achieving gender equality in the greater society was widely recognized.

56. National observances of the Year were mostly organized around a functionalist perspective on families, focusing on their real or potential contributions to development and on the problems within or external to families which undermined constructive family functioning. This approach generally proved very useful as a basis for consensus building and joint action, although a number of issues still remained divisive. A critical outcome of the Year at the national level was the recognition that much existing policy and practice could be improved.

57. The intense involvement of the non-governmental sector at the national level was perceived as an important element for the successful outcome of the Year.

VII. MAJOR INSTRUMENTS, CAMPAIGNS AND SPECIAL INITIATIVES

58. In addition to measures already described, numerous other special initiatives, campaigns and projects for the Year were undertaken by several actors. To the extent possible, these are mentioned in the relevant publications of the secretariat for the Year, including the calendar of events. The secretariat played a catalytic, facilitative and/or implementing role for many of them. Some of the major initiatives and projects are briefly described below.

59. Official emblem. An official emblem for the Year was chosen in 1990. Guidelines on its use, in the six official languages, and camera-ready copies were widely distributed.

60. Booklet on the Year. A booklet on the Year, containing detailed basic information on its substantive and organizational aspects, was published as early as 1990 in English, and subsequently in French and Spanish. Approximately 110,000 copies were distributed. The booklet was translated into the national languages in several countries.

61. Theme song. A theme song for the Year, entitled "The family", was selected in 1992. Its lyrics and music were widely distributed; its use was promoted and national language versions were sung in several countries.

62. "Testimonials of IYF patrons". As a means of promoting action for the Year and recognizing outstanding contributions, testimonials designating their recipients as the Year's patrons were established by the Coordinator for the Year in 1992. Since then, almost 500 testimonials have been awarded to individuals, governmental institutions, national coordinating committees, intergovernmental and voluntary organizations, research and academic institutions, and private firms from around the world.

63. Bulletin on the Year. The secretariat for the Year published, quarterly, "The family: bulletin on the International Year of the Family", in English, French and Spanish; its 18 issues between 1991 and 1995 had an average distribution of 12,000 copies each.

64. IYF Occasional Papers Series. In 1992, the secretariat initiated the IYF Occasional Papers Series, as a vehicle for reportage on the state of current thinking on some of the pivotal issues concerning families. Seventeen issues have been published in English, and three issues are scheduled for publication in 1995. An average of 3,000 copies of each issue were distributed.

65. "First Ladies for the Family". In 1991, the then First Lady of Costa Rica, Madame Gloria de Calderon-Fournier, launched a campaign among the First Ladies of the world to support the Year, with the theme "First Ladies for the Family". As part of this campaign, in September 1993, the First Ladies of Latin America and the Caribbean adopted the Declaration of Costa Rica in support of the Year.

66. "North Americans for IYF". "North Americans for IYF" has been an ongoing regional voluntary initiative in support of the Year, begun in early 1992 and organized in cooperation with the San Diego Chapter of the United Nations Association of the United States of America. The initiative continues to carry out a major information campaign focusing on local activities and strengthening networks of people and organizations interested in family issues.

67. Ad hoc inter-agency meetings on the Year. In order to achieve a harmonized and coordinated approach and action by the organizations and agencies of the United Nations system, ad hoc inter-agency meetings on the Year were instituted by the Administrative Committee on Coordination (ACC). These meetings were organized annually from 1991 to 1995.

68. Regional and interregional preparatory meetings for the Year. In order to provide impetus and support for national and local activities, four regional and interregional preparatory meetings for the Year were held in 1993, attended by representatives of a total of 110 countries, some of which attended more than one meeting:

(a) United Nations Africa and Western Asia Preparatory Meeting for the International Year of the Family, held from 29 March to 2 April 1993 at Tunis, organized by the secretariat for the Year in cooperation with the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) and the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA), at the invitation of the Government of Tunisia;

(b) United Nations Europe and North America Preparatory Meeting for the International Year of the Family, held from 26 to 30 April 1993 at Valletta, organized by the secretariat for the Year in cooperation with the Economic Commission for Europe (ECE), at the invitation of the Government of Malta;

(c) United Nations Asia and Pacific Preparatory Meeting for the International Year of the Family, held from 24 to 28 May 1993 at Beijing, organized by the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) in cooperation with the secretariat for the Year, at the invitation of the Government of the People's Republic of China;

(d) United Nations Latin America and Caribbean Preparatory Meeting for the International Year of the Family, held from 9 to 13 August 1993 at Cartagena de Indias, organized by the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) in cooperation with the secretariat for the Year, at the invitation of the Government of Colombia.

69. The meetings adopted specific recommendations and political statements of support for the Year: the Declaration of Tunis, the Valletta Declaration, the Beijing Declaration on the Family in Asia and the Pacific, and the Cartagena Declaration, respectively. Further details on the meetings are contained in the Secretary-General's report on the Year to the General Assembly at its forty-eighth session (A/48/293).

70. World Non-Governmental Organizations Forum Launching the Year. The World Non-Governmental Organizations Forum Launching the International Year of the Family was held from 28 November to 2 December 1993 at Valletta, with the theme "Promoting families for the well-being of individuals and societies". It was organized by the Non-Governmental Organizations Committee on the Family at Vienna, in cooperation with other non-governmental organization (NGO) committees and the secretariat for the Year, at the invitation of the Government of Malta. Attended by more than 1,000 participants from over 100 countries, the Forum was the first such gathering of NGOs working on family issues. It highlighted the involvement of the NGOs in the Year and provided a unique impetus for local action all over the world, especially by providing a platform for networking, information exchange and fostering ideas. The Forum endorsed the Malta Statement of the World NGO Forum.

71. International Day of Families. In its resolution 47/237, the General Assembly decided that, beginning in 1994, 15 May of every year shall be observed

as the International Day of Families. The secretariat for the Year promoted the observance of the Day in 1994 and 1995 and distributed suggestions for activities. In 1994, the Day was observed under the theme of the Year - "Family: resources and responsibilities in a changing world". The theme for the Day in 1995 was "Tolerance begins in the family", in view of the observance of 1995 as the United Nations Year for Tolerance. The Fifth Ad Hoc Inter-Agency Meeting on the Year recommended the following themes for the Day's observances in the forthcoming years - 1996: "Families - victims of poverty and homelessness"; 1997: "Building families on equality and equity"; 1998: "Family - source of education for human rights"; 1999: "Families for all ages"; and 2000: "Families - agents of development and social progress".

72. Family themes for observance of international days in 1994. In 1994, family-specific themes were adopted for the observance of international days other than the International Day of Families: World Environment Day, 5 June, under the theme "One earth, one family"; World Habitat Day, 3 October, with the theme "Home and the family"; and World AIDS Day, 1 December, under the theme "Families take care".

73. International conference: "Today's families: a bridge to the future", and the International Family Policy Forum. An international conference of governmental and non-governmental sectors, entitled "Today's families: a bridge to the future", was held at Montreal from 12 to 15 October 1994. It was organized by the International Conferences on Social Development in cooperation with the secretariat for the Year and the Canadian Committee for the Year. The Conference was attended by over 500 participants from more than 55 countries, and adopted the Montreal Statement. Discussions held in the context of the Conference led to the launching of an International Family Policy Forum, which is expected to become operational in Montreal in 1995. The Forum's objective is to support policy-making at all levels by promoting and providing partnerships, information, expertise and a developmental approach to emerging policy issues as well as international dialogue.

74. United Nations Interregional Meeting of National Coordinators/Focal Points for the International Year of the Family. The United Nations Interregional Meeting of National Coordinators/Focal Points for the Year was convened from 4 to 9 February 1995 at Bratislava by the secretariat for the Year, in collaboration with the Bratislava International Centre for Family Studies and at the invitation of the Government of Slovakia. It was attended by representatives of 73 countries and observers from concerned organizations. The meeting reviewed the global observances of the Year and their implications for national social policies in the process of sustainable development; considered concepts and forms of international cooperation on family issues, with particular emphasis on assistance to developing countries; and identified strategies and recommendations regarding national, regional and international follow-up to the Year.

75. IYF Patron Cities Program and World Conference of Mayors, Local Government and Private Sector Partners. The IYF Patron Cities Program was initiated in 1993 by Salt Lake City, Utah, United States, with the objective of promoting active participation of cities, local government and private-sector partners in the Year and stimulating specific action by them on behalf of families. The

programme organized a World Conference of Mayors, Local Government and Private Sector Partners, from 16 to 19 March 1995 at Salt Lake City, in cooperation with the secretariat of the Year and hosted by Salt Lake City and Salt Lake County. It was attended by some 500 participants from more than 50 countries. It adopted the Salt Lake City Declaration on Family-friendly Communities and initiated a network of cities, local governments and private-sector corporations and businesses on families.

76. Bratislava International Centre for Family Studies. The Bratislava International Centre for Family Studies was established by the Government of Slovakia in September 1993. It serves as a national centrepiece for Slovakia on family issues and as an international platform for promoting global cooperation in family research, training and exchange. Its affiliation with the United Nations has been proposed by the Government. In its resolution 47/237, the General Assembly noted with interest "the proposal by the Government of Slovakia that the Bratislava International Centre for Family Studies be affiliated with the United Nations".

77. Center for Family-friendly Cities. The Center for Family-friendly Cities was established in 1994 at the University of Akron, Ohio, United States. The Center will serve as an international resource for cities, public and private-sector organizations, educational institutions and businesses that work on urban matters. It has established a communications network that is designed to search, retrieve and store information on family-friendly programmes in urban settings.

78. Australian Institute for Family Studies' research network on family issues. The Australian Institute for Family Studies, with the support of the secretariat for the Year, published the International Directory of IYF Research Activities and has initiated an interactive international research network on family issues.

79. The Austrian Institute for Family Research. The Austrian Institute for Family Research was established by the Austrian Federal Ministry of Youth and Family. The Institute's objectives are to improve conditions of family life for the general welfare of families and to promote a network for cooperation in national and international research on families.

80. Austrian Visitors' Programme for Studying Exemplary Family Benefits and Family Services. The Visitors' Programme was also initiated by the Austrian Federal Ministry of Youth and Family as an incentive for international cooperation and exchange of information on family issues. It offers an opportunity to representatives of developing countries to study family issues and programmes in Austria.

VIII. ACTION BY THE SECRETARIAT

81. In June 1990, the Secretary-General designated the Director of the Social Development Division as Coordinator for the International Year of the Family. A small organizational secretariat for the Year was also established. In the context of the restructuring of the economic and social sectors of the United

Nations Secretariat in 1993, the Coordinator and the secretariat remained at Vienna, as part of the Department for Policy Coordination and Sustainable Development.

82. The Secretary-General, in addition to addressing the relevant plenary meetings of the General Assembly, issued 11 messages in connection with the Year.

83. A priority task of the secretariat for the Year, which served as a catalyst, facilitator and coordinator of action, was mobilizing and assisting the numerous potential actors to undertake effective measures for the Year. Other priorities included substantive servicing of intergovernmental bodies and meetings; promoting and anchoring the Year's substantive orientation and objectives; initiating and conducting an intense promotional and information campaign; and resource mobilization.

84. Based on an assumption that the subject of the family lends itself to a cross-sectoral approach in social policy and offers a unique convergence and comprehensiveness of issues, efforts were made to promote coverage of a broad spectrum of substantive issues, while maintaining the focus on the Year's basic objectives. This proved effective and instrumental in achieving broad support for the Year and in alleviating any initial concerns.

85. The secretariat maintained close contacts with the Year's major actors throughout the process. A series of discussions was held with numerous high-level government officials and policy makers, heads of organizations, leaders of research and academic institutions as well as the private sector. In response to requests, advisory services were provided to Governments, national coordination mechanisms and the non-governmental community. Substantive contributions to and participation in a series of special events were made. Numerous articles and introductory statements for publications were provided. Valuable resources were mobilized for the Year from the public and private sectors, including the business community, in both cash contributions to the Voluntary Fund for the Year, totalling more than $2 million, and numerous in-kind contributions to the secretariat for the Year.

86. Concerted efforts were made, and harmonized approaches adopted, to highlight and promote the family-related aspects of the major United Nations conferences and international years. The secretariat worked in close cooperation with the secretariat units responsible for servicing those events. A memorandum of understanding was signed regarding the collaborative arrangements between the secretariat for the Year and the International Olympic Committee, the Bureau of Coordination of the International Year of Sport and the Olympic Ideal, 1994.

87. The secretariat for the Year prepared reports and provided substantive services to the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council and the Commission for Social Development in their deliberations relating to the Year and family issues. This included organizational support for the meetings of the General Assembly for the official launching of the Year and for the International Conference on Families.

88. A priority concern was to mobilize and assist Member States in preparing for and observing the Year. Suggested guidelines on the establishment of national coordination mechanisms were made available in 1991. A Guide for a National Action Programme on the Year was issued in 1992. The national coordinating mechanisms and focal points were kept abreast of developments through circular letters and periodic mailings of materials. Regular reports and updated lists were widely circulated on the formation of national coordinating mechanisms, the designation of national focal points and on emerging national plans, to encourage and facilitate such developments in other countries. Two editions of an Inventory of National Action were published, the first in 1992 and the second in 1994. Four regional and interregional preparatory meetings were undertaken. The United Nations Interregional Meeting of National Coordinators/Focal Points for the International Year of the Family was held. An Interregional Meeting on the Role of the Family in the Socialization of Youth was organized. Moreover, throughout the process, extensive documentation and material to launch promotional and information activities was provided.

89. The secretariat also paid special attention to mobilizing other partners, assisting them in their efforts and collaborating closely with them. It provided substantive support for the activities of the organizations and agencies of the United Nations system, promoted inter-agency collaboration, organized and followed up on five annual ad hoc inter-agency meetings on the Year and took the lead role in implementing their recommendations. It published a compilation of the family-related mandates and activities of the concerned entities of the United Nations system, entitled "United Nations System and the IYF".

90. The secretariat maintained an extensive network of cooperation and support with several other intergovernmental organizations and a large number of international, regional and national non-governmental organizations. During the early preparatory stages, three informal consultative meetings of representatives of non-governmental organizations committees and groups on the family were held to explore ways of effective and advance cooperation. Particularly noteworthy was the secretariat's close cooperation with the Non-Governmental Organizations Committees on the Family at Vienna, New York and Paris. They were invited to participate, in an observer capacity, in the ad hoc inter-agency meetings on the Year. The secretariat provided extensive organizational and substantive support for holding the World Non-Governmental Organizations Forum Launching the Year.

91. The secretariat worked closely with numerous academic and research institutes, encouraged research on family issues and promoted collaboration among family-related research institutes. More than 200 institutions, working in family-related areas in 116 countries, were contacted. The secretariat signed a memorandum of understanding with the Australian Institute for Family Studies and closely cooperated with it.

92. The secretariat initiated, implemented and/or provided support for numerous special undertakings for the Year, as described in section VII above. Substantive and promotional support was also provided to a wide range of other meetings, events and initiatives, including through participation, messages and

provision of material. Several of these were held in cooperation with the secretariat.

93. The secretariat was responsible for the substantive management of the Voluntary Fund for the International Year of the Family. It carried out work for the allocation of the Fund's resources, reviewed numerous requests for funding, processed grants for projects and monitored their implementation. It published a Project Catalogue, containing information on projects supported by the Fund and on those identified for consideration by donors.

94. The secretariat conducted a substantive publications programme and supported publications on family issues. Several of its publications are mentioned above. Seventeen issues of the IYF Occasional Papers Series have been published, on the following topics: Family matters; Family: forms and functions; Family and crime; Older persons in the family: facets of empowerment; Family as an environment: an ecosystem perspective on family life; Partnership families: building the smallest democracy at the heart of society; Family leave: changing needs of the world's workers; Family enrichment: programmes to foster healthy family development; The intersection of family, gender and economy in the developing world; Families and disability; The family and youth: issues, problems and opportunities; Migration and the family; The elderly and the family in developing countries; Reinventing fatherhood; The concept of family health; Families: agents and beneficiaries of social development; and Families in exile: reflections from the experience of UNHCR. Three closing issues are scheduled, on: Families and education; Families function; and Empowering families. In cooperation with the secretariat, United Nations Publications is finalizing a book containing the first 15 papers of this series. The secretariat is also finalizing an indicative guide for action on family issues, to serve as a stimulus for long-term follow-up action to the Year. Also planned for publication is a compilation of the Secretary-General's statements and messages in connection with the Year.

95. The secretariat carried out an extensive public information and promotional campaign in close cooperation with the Department of Public Information of the United Nations Secretariat and promoted the active involvement of the mass media and the private sector. In addition to a basic booklet, the official emblem and a theme song, numerous other materials were developed and widely disseminated from an early stage onwards. These included two introductory posters, published in 1990 and 1991, and a major campaign poster in the six official languages, published in 1992; a press kit, three public television announcements and two documentary films on single-parent families and on the family and ageing, produced by the Department of Public Information; a regularly updated calendar of events related to the Year; stickers on the Year and the International Day of Families.

96. As part of its promotional and information campaign, the secretariat initiated and supported the implementation of numerous projects. This included world-wide information campaigns specifically addressed to television and radio networks, newspapers, magazines and airlines to encourage topical coverage and promotion; numerous gift and commemorative items displaying the logo of the Year, such as timepieces, cloth emblems, T-shirts, keychains, calendars, umbrellas, earrings, balloons, brooches, pins, etc; souvenir items by the United

Nations Sales Section and the UNICEF Greeting Card Operation; a special series of commemorative IYF stamps by the United Nations Postal Administration and some 60 national postal administrations; art and photo exhibitions and competitions; promotional publications; and concerts devoted to the Year.

IX. REGIONAL LEVEL ACTION

97. A wide array of activities was undertaken at the regional level, including four regional preparatory meetings, with the objective of supporting and supplementing national and local efforts. The regional commissions of the United Nations played a leading role in this regard, in close cooperation with the secretariat for the Year and in harmony with regional intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations as well as the regional offices and affiliates of concerned international organizations. Several of these measures were described in the Secretary-General's earlier reports as well as in the secretariat's publication entitled United Nations System and the IYF. Mentioned below are indicative features and examples of major activities of the regional commissions of the United Nations.

98. The activities of ECE included studies on family change and policies; a project entitled "Promotion of fertility and family surveys in developing ECE countries"; the convening of the European Population Conference, which had fertility and family as one of its themes; and sensitizing non-governmental organizations about the Year and promoting their participation.

99. The pivotal role of the family in development is recognized in the Social Development Strategy for the ESCAP Region Towards the Year 2000 and Beyond, adopted by the Fourth Asian and Pacific Ministerial Conference on Social Welfare and Social Development, held in October 1991. Issues relating to the family are an important element of the Strategy. ESCAP published studies on the changing role of the family as a social institution in development in the Asian-Pacific region, on national policies and programmes for the family in Asia and the Pacific and on the role of the family in development. The Commission also enhanced public awareness of family issues in the region through a special issue of the Social Development Newsletter, which focused on the family and development.

100. ECLAC promoted national efforts and helped to improve the coordination of regional efforts of the United Nations agencies; provided information and analysis of the current situation of families; conducted policy-oriented studies; and elaborated proposals for governmental action. ECLAC's publication entitled Social Panorama included studies on the conditions under which families may hinder the educational achievement of children and youth. The Commission convened meetings and workshops, which addressed: a regional diagnosis of the situation of families; data collection techniques and methodologies for the improvement of the statistical visibility of family issues; family, development and population dynamics in Latin America and the Caribbean; and information requirements for the design of social policies on family issues.

101. ECA focused on analysing and promoting accurate knowledge on the impact of socio-economic changes and developments on the family. The Third African

Population Conference was convened by ECA at Dakar in December 1992; its agenda included the topic "African family systems in the context of socio-economic development". ECA organized an expert group meeting on the impact of economic and social changes on the African family.

102. ESCWA focused on reviewing and analysing the impact of socio-economic changes on the Arab family, harmonizing the role of women within and outside the family, assessing the needs of the family in terms of shelter, and surveying families in war-torn areas. It prepared a regional study on the impact of social and economic changes on the Arab family; organized a regional seminar on the role of the family in integrating disabled women into society; and convened an expert group meeting on the Arab family. Studies were also carried out on family planning, health and family well-being; the role of the informal sector, particularly the family, in providing support and services to the elderly in the ESCWA region; the situation of families in Western Asia; and an assessment of the situation of Arab women returnees and their families as a result of the Gulf war.

X. ACTION BY THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM AND INTER-AGENCY COOPERATION

103. The General Assembly, in its resolutions 44/82, 45/133, 46/92 and 47/237, invited the specialized agencies and organizations to exert all possible efforts in the preparation for and observance of the Year and to cooperate with the Secretary-General in achieving its objectives. A total of 34 concerned entities of the United Nations system, including the regional commissions, undertook numerous and diverse specific measures. Within the United Nations Secretariat, the following offices were involved in activities for the Year: Department for Policy Coordination and Sustainable Development (the secretariat for the International Year of the Family, Division for Social Policy and Development and the Division for the Advancement of Women), Department for Economic and Social Information and Policy Analysis (Population Division and Statistical Office), Department of Administration and Management (Conference Services), Department of Public Information, ECE, ESCAP, ECLAC, ECA, ESCWA, United Nations Office at Vienna (Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Branch), United Nations Centre for Human Rights, United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) and United Nations Environment Programme. The United Nations bodies concerned included: Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), United Nations Development Fund for Women, United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), United Nations International Drug Control Programme (UNDCP), United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) and United Nations University. Research institutes included: United Nations Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute, United Nations Research Institute for Social Development and International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women. Two joint bodies were involved: the World Food Council and the World Food Programme. The specialized agencies included: International Labour Organization, Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), World Health Organization (WHO), World Bank, Universal

Postal Union, World Meteorological Organization and International Fund for Agricultural Development.

104. A detailed description of each entity's activities and the measures for inter-agency cooperation and coordination is contained in the Secretary-General's earlier reports and in the secretariat's publication entitled "United Nations System and the IYF".

105. At an early stage of preparation, the concerned entities of the United Nations system designated a focal point for the Year, in order to facilitate and coordinate contributions. They also undertook a review of their respective family-related mandates and programmes and identified priorities as well as venues for involvement. Whereas activities for the Year were generally undertaken within the context of ongoing programmes, a number of new projects were also initiated. Efforts were made to reformulate and reorient programmes, so as to reflect the Year's objectives, incorporate and highlight family-specific elements and provide more emphasis on different aspects of the functioning of families.

106. The Year also led to the adoption of a family-centred or family-oriented approach in programme implementation and service delivery, strengthening of programme elements relating to the family and specific new mandates for family-related work from intergovernmental bodies, such as the World Health Assembly. Specific activities undertaken included substantive studies, technical and statistical publications, seminars and expert group meetings, research and the promotion of research, data collection, formulation of policy and programme recommendations, provision of technical assistance and advisory services to Governments and organizations, implementation of family-oriented projects, collaboration with and provision of technical and financial support for the non-governmental sector, promotion of family-dimensions in various contexts and participation in the work of the ad hoc inter-agency meetings on the Year. Issues covered included: gender equality and advancement of women; social integration and issues relating to young persons, persons with disability and the elderly; children's rights; role of families in education and cultural development; crime prevention and criminal justice; drug abuse; human rights within the family and the role of the family in promotion of the individual's rights; living conditions of families; the role of families in environmental protection; poverty alleviation; family reunification, refugee families and Palestinian refugee families; population and development; socio-economic development activities; employment promotion and protection of workers with family responsibilities; agricultural and rural development; food security; and family and health.

107. The organizations and agencies also served as a valuable channel for the promotion and dissemination of information. Their communication channels and substantive contacts were effectively utilized to raise awareness. Several of them also conducted targeted promotional and information campaigns.

108. Several organizations and agencies functioned as effective catalysts for generating activities at the national and local levels, particularly through their regional and field offices, by disseminating material, providing technical support, organizing activities and participating in the work of national

coordination mechanisms for the Year. In particular, the United Nations information centres and the country and regional offices of UNDP, UNHCR, UNFPA, UNICEF, UNESCO and WHO were effectively involved at the national and local levels.

109. The ad hoc inter-agency meetings on the Year were instrumental in refining and sustaining a jointly elaborated substantive direction for the Year and on numerous important projects. They imparted and demonstrated the endorsement of the Year's objectives by numerous entities of the system and helped to achieve coherence of approaches regarding the complex issues, thus helping to dispel initial concerns regarding the Year. They provided an effective platform for the entities of the United Nations system to coordinate their efforts; ensured a continuous and vitally important flow of information and exchange; and were instrumental in achieving a significantly increased level of participation of the various entities. Projects undertaken included a joint statement on the Year, a long-term inter-agency project on support for capacity-building and empowering families, numerous substantive papers, a manual on provisions relating to the family contained in United Nations conventions and other instruments, and a series of promotional activities. A significant feature of the meetings was the consistent effort to reinforce the substantive linkages between the Year and relevant major events and conferences. The meetings also served as a forum for partnership building with the non-governmental community.

XI. ACTION BY INTERGOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS

110. Several intergovernmental organizations, including those in which families do not figure prominently as a focus of activities, participated in the observance of the Year. In particular, they disseminated information, organized or sponsored meetings and seminars, conducted or promoted research, provided assistance and guidance in policy development and strengthened the focus on the family in ongoing activities. Several of them identified a focal point for the Year. Statements and decisions of governing bodies were adopted, expressing support for the Year and calling for specific action. Through their work in related areas, intergovernmental organizations played an important supportive role for national action. They provided financial and other support for national projects and involved their networks of organizations, affiliates and national contacts in activities for the Year.

111. Intergovernmental organizations that participated in the observance of the Year included: African Development Bank, Asian Development Bank, Association of South East Asian Nations, Caribbean Community, Colombo Plan for Cooperative and Social Development in Asia and the Pacific, Commonwealth Secretariat, Council of Europe, Economic Community of West African States, Commission of the European Union, European Economic Community, League of Arab States, Fund for International Development of the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries, Organization of African Unity, Organization of American States, Southern African Development Coordination Conference and South Pacific Commission. A few examples of their activities are described below.

112. The African Development Bank centred its activities for the Year on the theme "Food resources: production, distribution, availability and preparation

and family income". The Organization of African Unity adopted a resolution in support of the Year and collaborated with ECA in holding an expert group meeting on the impact of social and economic changes on the African family. The Asian Development Bank contributed to the Year through its programmes of support for economic and social development, as they related to household income, welfare of children and the social and economic status of women. The Committee on Social Development of the Association of South East Asian Nations decided that its Plan of Action on Social Development should include strengthening the role of the family as one of its major strategic thrusts and that existing programmes should be strengthened and new cooperative programmes developed on families. The Association is also undertaking a feasibility study on the establishment of a regional centre/network for family and child development. The Commonwealth Secretariat utilized its network to disseminate information. The Fund for International Development of the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries supported numerous projects, including special measures to promote family welfare, through loans and grants. Major features of the activities of the Caribbean Community included the consideration of the Year by the fifth meeting of ministers responsible for women's affairs; adoption of a regional focus, centred on family issues related to working wives and mothers, street children and the impact of migration; research; and support to Caribbean families through field projects. The Organization of American States worked through its focal point, the Inter-American Children's Institute, which developed an inventory of policy makers, institutions and other concerned bodies; promoted research and exchange; and developed a bibliographic service. The Commission of the European Union conducted an opinion survey; supported numerous meetings; and developed supporting mechanisms for exchange on family related issues, such as through the European Observatory on Family Policies and a network on work and family responsibilities. The Council of Europe undertook several special initiatives, such as a survey of national family policy, a comparison of levels of responsibility for family issues, discussions on the Year by the Conference of Ministers responsible for Family Affairs at various sessions, adoption by the Committee of Ministers of a recommendation on coherent and integrated family policies, as well as numerous activities on childhood policies, adult education, health, bioethics and family law. The Nordic Council, in cooperation with the Nordic Council of Ministers, held the Nordic Forum 1994 on "Women's work and life". The League of Arab States convened an expert group meeting on rights and law with respect to families and an Arab Conference on the Family, which adopted an Arab Statement on Family Rights.

XII. ACTION BY NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS

113. Non-governmental organizations were a major partner for the Year. They served as a vital mobilizing and advocacy force, an effective actor and an essential link to the grass roots. They generated and implemented thousands of activities throughout the world. Their ingenuity, innovation, resourcefulness and grass-roots networks played a central role in the successful observance of the Year. They have also already initiated and are engaged in extensive measures for an effective follow-up to the Year. Several hundred international, regional and national NGOs were involved, including those with a broad social development or a family-specific focus as well as hundreds of others covering sectoral or group-specific issues.

114. The single most important contribution of NGOs was bringing the message of the Year to the grass roots, community organizations and families themselves and motivating and assisting their participation. Other contributions included promoting awareness and achievement of the Year's substantive goals; mobilizing political support and resources at all levels; mobilizing Governments to establish national coordination mechanisms and participating in them; identifying priority issues and strategies; undertaking substantive studies; implementing programmes and delivering services; contributing to the international exchange of experience and information; conducting special campaigns; organizing myriads of local, national and international activities; and promoting concepts and initiating measures for follow-up. In numerous countries they played a significant role in the work of national coordination mechanisms. In a few countries they were entrusted with the responsibility for coordinating the Year's observances. Furthermore, in some countries they set up non-governmental coordinating committees.

115. Non-governmental organizations adopted a multitude of strategies, approaches and measures. They made the most effective use of their wide network of contacts and communication channels. For example, from the early stage of preparation onwards, numerous organizations incorporated the Year's official emblem in their materials and included articles in their publications. Several organizations set up special organizational structures for the Year. Special sessions on the Year were held during the regular meetings and a series of special events and publications was undertaken. Some organizations drew up policy and position papers on the family, while others adopted pertinent resolutions.

116. Numerous NGOs incorporated multifarious measures in their programme activities. Some developed specific programmes, focusing on substantive areas of direct concern to them. Whereas several organizations sought to address a broad variety of issues in the context of the Year, some concentrated on sectoral or group-specific issues. Field projects were undertaken to assist families, such as supporting thousands of destitute families in their various needs, building houses, providing clean water and assistance in the educational needs of children. Efforts were made to promote research and data collection. Attention was also given to introducing a family focus into training programmes and to incorporating family components in training activities.

117. An important feature of the non-governmental community's effective participation and contributions was the significant role of a few non-governmental platforms. Most prominent among them was the Non-Governmental Organizations Committee on the Family in Vienna, which contributed a distinguished record of hard work and major achievements. Also prominent were the Non-governmental Organizations Committee on the Family in New York and the Non-governmental Organizations Group on the Family of the Non-governmental Organizations (UNESCO) Standing Committee in Paris.

118. Major elements of work of the Non-governmental Organizations Committee on the Family in Vienna included: a series of international seminars on family issues, from 1987 to 1995; a world-wide information sharing network consisting of some 1,500 grass-roots family-related organizations from 120 countries; extensive promotional efforts to stimulate awareness and action and to link up

the international and grass-roots levels; promotional and information material, consisting of a "Checklist of activities for an effective IYF", "National coordinating bodies for IYF", "Putting IYF into your events", "Checklist for activities in the interest of families now and in the future", four editions of "Highlights of IYF action" and 19 issues of a newsletter, entitled "Families international"; a substantive document entitled "Guiding principles on the family", to serve as a framework for a declaration on family rights and responsibilities; participation in and contributions to the relevant sessions of the Commission for Social Development and the General Assembly; and holding the World Non-governmental Organizations Forum Launching the Year. Details on the Forum are provided in section VII above. In order to facilitate its work, in April 1992, the Committee set up an IYF-NGO Executive Secretariat, which was supported by the Governments of Austria, Germany, Liechtenstein and Switzerland as well as other NGOs and individuals. In cooperation with the secretariat for the Year, the Committee also published a cookbook, entitled "Family favourites", and through its sale generated money for the Voluntary Fund for the Year.

119. The activities of the Non-governmental Organizations Committee on the Family in New York included contributions to intergovernmental meetings; numerous meetings on such issues as the advancement of women, drug abuse, the situation of refugees, mental health, disability, shelter, cultural change and development programmes; special programmes on topics such as "the family as the first community", "families and strategies of development", "fathers in contemporary life", "spiritual and ethical resources of the family", "family dynamics in the fast-changing world", "the well-being of families" and "beyond the IYF"; and inputs for major international conferences.

120. The Non-governmental Organizations Group on the Family of the Non-governmental Organizations (UNESCO) Standing Committee in Paris undertook various activities, with a major focus on educational and cultural aspects. Issues of particular concern were the family and the rights of the child, parents and education, the family and education, the family and cultural rights, the family in difficult circumstances and the family and tolerance. Highlights of its activities included an international symposium on educational functions of the family and cultural change, and a substantive publication entitled "The family, new dynamics".

121. Other NGO forums that were involved in the Year included the Non-governmental Organizations Development Committee in Geneva and its Family Life Education Subcommittee, the Non-governmental Organizations Committee on UNICEF, the United Nations/Non-governmental Organizations Group on Women and Development, the Conference of Non-governmental Organizations in Consultative Status with the Economic and Social Council and the Executive Committee of Non-governmental Organizations associated with the Department of Public Information of the United Nations Secretariat.

122. Numerous international and regional NGOs participated in the Year. Their activities were extensive, as described in the earlier reports of the Secretary-General (A/47/362, A/48/293 and E/CN.5/1993/3). Many other activities were listed in the calendar of events related to the Year.

123. International and regional NGOs that informed the secretariat for the Year of their participation included: Asociación Latinoamericana para los Derechos Humanos, Association for Psychotherapy and Family Therapy, Association Mondiale des Amis de l'Enfance, Association Internationale des Femmes Francophones, Association of African Universities, Association of Former International Civil Servants, African Association of Education for Development, African Association for Literacy and Adult Education, All India Women's Conference, Associated Country Women of the World, Baha'i International Community, Brahma Kumaris World Spiritual University, Brothers of Christian Schools, Caritas Internationalis (International Confederation of Catholic Charities), Catholic International Education Office, Christian Children's Fund, Inc., Confederation of Family Organisations in the European Community, Crossways International, Defense for Children International Movement, Disabled Peoples' International, Eurolink Age, European Family Therapy Association, European Federation for the Family, European Federation for the Welfare of the Elderly, European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions, European Network Parenthood and Drug Abuse, European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Abuse, European Parents Association, European Society for Mental Health and Deafness, European Union of Women, Fédération des Unions de Familles, Fédération Internationale Terre des Hommes, Friends World Committee for Consultation (Quakers), Foundation for the Rights of the Family - International Secretariat (PRODEFA), General Arab Women's Federation, General Conference of the Seventh-day Adventists, Global Family, Helpage International, IPS - Inter Press Service International Cooperative, International Abolitionist Federation, International Academy of Family Psychology, International Academy of Matrimonial Lawyers, International Alliance of Women - Equal Rights, Equal Responsibilities, International Anglican Family Network, International Association for Volunteer Effort, International Association of Charities, International Association of Juvenile and Family Court Magistrates, International Association of Lions Clubs - Lions Club International, International Association of Schools of Social Work, International Association of Women in Radio and Television, International Catholic Child Bureau, International Catholic Committee of Nurses and Medico-Social Assistants, International Centre for Study and Development, International Community Education Association, International Confederation of Christian Family Movements, International Confederation of Free Trade Unions, International Confederation of Midwives, International Cooperative Alliance, International Council of Catholic Men, International Council of Jewish Women, International Council of Nurses, International Council of Psychologists, International Council of Women, International Council on Alcohol and Addictions, International Council on Disability, International Council on Social Welfare, International Council on the Management of Population Programmes, International Family Federation, International Family Foundation, International Family Policy Forum, International Family Therapy Association, International Federation for Child Welfare, International Federation for Family Life Promotion, International Federation for Home Economics, International Federation for Parent Education, International Federation of Business and Professional Women, International Federation of Disabled Workers and Civilian Handicapped, International Federation of Educative Communities, International Federation of Pedestrians, International Federation of Rural Adult Catholic Movements, International Federation of Settlements and Neighbourhood Centres, International Federation of Social Workers, International Federation of University Women, International Federation of Women in Legal Careers, International Federation on Ageing,

International Friendship League, International Group of Catholic Parents Associations, International Humanist and Ethical Union, the International Initiative, International Inner Wheel, International Kolping Society, International League of Societies for Persons with Mental Handicaps, International Leprosy Union, International Movement ATD Fourth World, International Organization of Consumers Unions, International Planned Parenthood Federation, International Progress Organization, International Round Table for the Advancement of Counselling, International Social Science Council, International Social Security Association, International Social Service, International Society of Family Law, International Sociological Association, International Study Center for Children and Families, International Union of Family Organisations, International Women's Rights Action Watch, La Leche League International Inc., Law Association for Asia and the Western Pacific, League of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, Ligue pour la Lecture de la Bible, Medical Women's International Association, Mother and Child International (International Association for Maternal and Neonatal Health), Movement for a Better World, Muslim World League, National Council of German Women's Organizations - Federal Union of Women's Organizations and Women's Groups of German Associations, E.V., New Humanity Focolare Movement, Non-aligned Students and Youth Organizations, Pan-Pacific and South-east Asia Women's Association, Pax Christi - International Catholic Peace Movement, Pax Romana, Rehabilitation International, Rotary International, Salvation Army, Save the Children Fund, Service and Research Foundation of Asia on Family and Culture, Socialist International, Socialist International Women, Society for International Development, Soroptimist International, SOS - Kinderdorf International, Steering Group of Catholic Family Organizations in Europe, The Experiment in International Living, Union of Arab Jurists, United Schools International, Universal Esperanto Association, Vesper Society, Women for Racial and Economic Equality, Women's International Democratic Federation, Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, Women's World Summit, World Alliance of Young Men's Christian Associations, World Assembly of Youth, World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts, World Christian Life Community, World Council of Churches, World Federation for Mental Health, World Federation of Methodist Women, World Federation of Therapeutic Communities, World Federation of Trade Unions, World Federation of Ukrainian Women's Organizations, World Federation of UNESCO Centres, Clubs and Associations, World Federation of United Nations Associations, World Goodwill, World Leisure and Recreation Association, World Movement of Mothers, World Organization for Early Childhood Education, World Organization for the Family, World Organization of Family Doctors, World Organization of the Scout Movement, World Peace Council, World Peace Day Association, World Union for Progressive Judaism, World Union of Catholic Women's Organizations, World Veterans Federation, World Vision International, World Young Women's Christian Association, Youth with a Mission and Zonta International.

124. The Inter-Parliamentary Union contributed a valuable measure of support, including discussion of the Year at the meeting of women parliamentarians of the Inter-Parliamentary Conference and the adoption of a resolution by the Inter-Parliamentary Council.

125. In addition, hundreds of national, local and community organizations and grass-roots groups, including the national associations or committees for the United Nations, UNICEF and UNESCO, were engaged in the Year, as illustrated by

nearly 200 organizations from over 60 countries which informed the secretariat for the Year of their actions, as well as the 486 projects of 285 organizations in 95 countries, listed in the fourth edition alone of the "Highlights of IYF Action", published by the Non-Governmental Organizations Committee on the Family in Vienna.

XIII. ACTION BY RESEARCH AND ACADEMIC INSTITUTIONS

126. Numerous research and academic institutions were actively involved in the Year. Universities often played a pivotal role in animating, supporting or leading local-level action. Specific measures included projects devoted to family issues, special meetings of experts, educators or researchers, educational or research programmes or publications. Research and academic institutions played a major role in the activities of intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations as well as in the work of national coordination mechanisms.

127. The priority assigned to research in national plans of action for the Year resulted in a significant increase in national and subnational level research on families, by both governmental and other institutions. There has also been greater public interest in family research as well as improved dialogue and cooperation between the research and academic community and policy makers. Institutional capability to undertake research or promote teaching and skills development in family issues was also greatly increased. Special interdisciplinary initiatives were launched and studies or publications undertaken. Through increased cooperation among the users and producers of social science research on families, numerous initiatives in support of such research were undertaken.

128. Priority issues pursued in research varied broadly, consistent with the priorities identified by national plans of action. Research activities included: comparative analyses, database development; curriculum development; demographic studies; opinion polls and surveys; evaluative research; census data development, refinement or expanded use; bibliographies; and case-studies.

129. Research and academic institutions also undertook numerous publications, including through their regular publications programmes, such as scholarly journals, or special issues and publications devoted to family issues. Regular new publications programmes were also established, as were other initiatives, such as bibliographic services, network supports or the introduction of new services or facilities through official statistical agencies. Information on 439 research activities from 60 countries is provided in the International Directory of IYF Research Activities.

XIV. IN-KIND CONTRIBUTIONS

130. Numerous in-kind contributions were made to the secretariat for the Year by Governments, organizations, firms in the private sector and individuals. Table 1 lists the in-kind contributions made by Governments. Table 2 lists the in-kind contributions made by organizations, the private sector and individuals.

Table 1. In-kind contributions to the secretariat for the International Year of the Family by Governments

Country	Type of contribution
Australia	Financing participation of a representative of a country from the Pacific region at the United Nations Interregional Meeting of National Coordinators/Focal Points for the Year
Austria a/	Associate expert for two years
	Contribution towards financing participation of representatives of least developed countries at the United Nations Interregional Meeting of National Coordinators/Focal Points for the Year
Canada	Non-reimbursable loan of staff for three years and five months
China	Hosting the United Nations Asia and Pacific Preparatory Meeting for the Year
Colombia	Hosting the United Nations Latin America and Caribbean Preparatory Meeting for the Year
Finland	Non-reimbursable loan of staff for six months
	Printing of booklet on the Year in English, 60,000 copies
France	Printing of booklet on the Year in French, 11,000 copies
Italy	Providing associate expert for two years
Malta	Hosting the United Nations Europe and North America Preparatory Meeting for the Year
	Hosting the World Non-governmental Organizations Forum Launching the Year
Slovakia	Hosting the United Nations Interregional Meeting of National Coordinators/Focal Points for the Year
Spain	Printing of booklet on the Year in Spanish, 25,000 copies
Sweden	Financing participation of a representative each from an Eastern European, a southern European and an African country at the United Nations Interregional Meeting of National Coordinators/Focal Points for the Year
Tunisia	Hosting the United Nations Africa and Western Asia Preparatory Meeting for the Year

a/ The Government of Austria also supported the work of the Non-Governmental Organizations Committee on the Family in Vienna through financial assistance amounting to S 1,650,000 (approx. US$ 145,000) from 1992 to 1995.

Table 2. In-kind contributions to the secretariat for the International Year of the Family by organizations, the private sector and individuals

Organization, firm or individual	Type of contribution
Austrian Worker's Compensation Board	Printing of booklet on the Year in English, 7,500 copies
Floraprint Austria	50,000 miniature poster bags
Hans Helf KG	IYF stickers, 150,000 copies
Jablonski, Eva	Designed the IYF cookbook, Family favourites, and two IYF stickers
Lion's Club International	Stickers for the International Day of Families, 108,000 copies
Littasy-Rollier, Cathérine	Designed and donated logotype of the Year and IYF season's greetings cards
Olivetti Austria GmbH	Data-processing equipment (six workstations plus server, one laser printer, one docking station and one monitor)
Phillips Dictation Systems	Voice manager dictation system
Piatnik-Playing Cards	8,000 IYF season's greetings cards
Reinach, Jacqueline	Wrote, composed and donated the theme song for the Year
University of Akron, Ohio	Stickers for the International Day of Families, 100,000 copies
Wang Austria	Loan of word-processing workstation for three years
Wiener Städtische	450 lapel pins depicting the logotype of the Year
Wiener Graphische Kunstanstalt, Otto Sares GmbH	Paper for and printing of a large quantity of stationery for the Year
Wiener Papier Grosshandlung GmbH	A large quantity of Pacific paper for producing a special folder for the Year

XV. VOLUNTARY FUND FOR THE INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF THE FAMILY

131. The Voluntary Fund for the International Year of the Family was established in early 1991, pursuant to General Assembly resolution 45/133. In that resolution, the Assembly requested the Secretary-General "to establish a voluntary fund for the preparation for and observance of the Year" and invited "all States and interested organizations to contribute to that fund".

132. As at 3 July 1995, a total cash contribution of $2,071,524 had been received by the Fund, of which $740,485 had come from Governments, $1,198,519 from the private sector, organizations and individuals and $132,520 from other sources. A group of business and professional leaders from Hong Kong contributed over $1 million to the Fund. Table 3 lists the contributions made by Governments.

Table 3. Contributions by Governments to the Voluntary Fund for the International Year of the Family, as at 3 July 1995

(United States dollars)

Country	Contribution
Austria	39 778
Belgium	20 000
Chile	2 000
China	20 000
Côte d'Ivoire	3 461
Cyprus	2 000
France	104 788
Germany	298 347
Greece	10 505
Holy See	2 073
Italy	17 793
Jordan	2 000
Luxembourg	17 150
Mauritius	500
Monaco	3 000
Namibia	1 000
New Zealand	51 757
Panama	15 000
Philippines	1 500
Poland	4 500
Portugal	8 123
Republic of Korea	2 000
Saint Lucia	1 000
Sao Tome and Principe	918
Spain	40 532
Switzerland	22 917
Thailand	3 000
Tunisia	2 000
Turkey	42 843
Total	740 485

133. As at 3 July 1995, estimated expenditures and resource allocations from the Fund totalled $1.6 million. Major elements of the expenditures/resource allocations comprised grants to projects; the four regional preparatory meetings, including participation costs for least developed countries; two expert group meetings, undertaken by regional commissions, and one interregional consultation; support to projects of bodies and organizations of the United Nations system; substantive studies and publications on family issues and the Year; public information and promotion; and technical, advisory and substantive services.

134. Provision of seed-money grants to small-scale family-specific projects has been a major priority of the Fund and the largest item of expenditure. So far, grants have been provided for 52 projects. Seventeen of these projects were earmarked for grants by donor Governments. Ten of the supported projects have been undertaken by Governments, 38 by NGOs, 3 by academic/research institutions and 1 by a field office of the United Nations Volunteers. Thirty-four of these projects are at the national level, 5 at the regional level and 13 at the international level. Out of the 39 national and regional projects, 17 are in Africa, 12 in Asia, 6 in Central, Eastern and/or southern Europe and 4 in Latin America and the Caribbean. The grants provided by the Fund, though small in terms of amount and mostly serving as seed money, have proved to be invaluable as a catalyst and have enabled the initiation of concrete activities of direct and long-term benefit to families in all parts of the world, mostly at the local level. Detailed information on the projects supported is contained in a project catalogue of the Fund.

XVI. SPECIFIC PROPOSALS ON THE FOLLOW-UP TO THE INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF THE FAMILY

135. In interpreting the General Assembly's request, in resolution 47/237, "to submit specific proposals on the follow-up to the Year, including a draft plan of action, if deemed appropriate," the Secretary-General concluded that basic to the follow-up process is the consistent and effective implementation of decisions and recommendations regarding families as reflected in the outcomes of the relevant United Nations conferences, taking into account the national experience of the Year. A concise analysis of those conferences is provided in sections V and VI above. This interpretation is also based on Commission for Social Development resolution 34/3, in which the Commission requested the Secretary-General "to prepare a concise draft reflecting the outcome of the relevant United Nations conferences and national experiences of the International Year of the Family".

136. In the light of the foregoing, pursuant to General Assembly resolution 47/237 and Commission for Social Development resolution 34/3, and based on the conclusions drawn from the observance of the Year, the following specific proposals are made on the follow-up to the International Year of the Family:

(a) Follow-up to the International Year of the Family should constitute another major phase in the long-term process of supporting families as basic social units. It should be guided by the principles established for the Year and should be based on a functional approach to families;

(b) The basic objective of the follow-up to the Year should be to translate the increased awareness regarding families and family issues into concrete measures (a) to support families in performing their societal and developmental functions and (b) to promote appropriate changes within families and build upon their strengths;

(c) Pursuant to the successful approach adopted for the Year and bearing in mind the diversity of families and their socio-economic contexts, follow-up activities should focus on the local and national levels. Decisions regarding specific measures and strategies to be taken should rest with each country, organization or other entity, as appropriate, taking into account the diversity of economic, social, cultural and political conditions;

(d) Follow-up measures should be fully congruent with duly approved international conventions, instruments and standards in the field of human rights and social policy and should contribute to the realization of their provisions as they apply to the individual members of the family. In particular, they should contribute to the implementation of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and the Convention on the Rights of the Child;

(e) Follow-up to the Year should form part of a holistic approach to development and social progress. Measures should be fully harmonized with overall development efforts. To the extent possible, activities should be integrated into existing policies and programmes, making use of the comprehensive and integrative platform that the subject of families offers;

(f) A cornerstone of the follow-up to the Year and long-term action regarding families should be the implementation of family dimensions of the outcomes of major international conferences of the 1990s. Agenda 21, adopted by the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action, adopted by the World Conference on Human Rights, the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development, and the Copenhagen Declaration and Programme of Action, adopted by the World Summit for Social Development, contain specific provisions relating to families. They also identify specific objectives and actions in these areas. The Platform of Action to be adopted by the forthcoming Fourth World Conference on Women and the Plan of Action to be adopted by the Second United Nations Conference on Human Settlements should contain further family-related provisions and objectives. All these encompass a broad spectrum of areas and call for concerted efforts at all levels. Corresponding measures should constitute a basic element of the follow-up to the Year. Consequently, family issues and family dimensions should also continue to receive adequate attention in the coordinated efforts to implement the outcome of the international conferences and other relevant undertakings, at all levels;

(g) Continued measures to sustain and increase awareness of the role of families and family issues will remain important, in order to develop further and maintain a strong constituency for families. The annual observance of the International Day of Families, on 15 May, provides a valuable occasion around which appropriate measures could be undertaken. Special attention should be given to the role and impact of the media;

(h) A participatory approach in policy and programme development and implementation is essential. Enlisting the participation of all segments of society in the elaboration and implementation of activities in support of families should be a priority task. Broad consultative processes are essential to build up commitment and consensus;

(i) The active involvement of family associations, other grass-roots and local networks, NGOs and the private sector should be ensured. Participation of family associations and grass-roots networks are especially important to ensure relevance and effectiveness of policies and programmes. Non-governmental organizations provide, in particular, an effective means of focusing on local and national initiatives and addressing most pressing concerns. The culture of partnership with them should be reinforced and their work facilitated. The reciprocal linkages between families and the private sector should be recognized and cooperation with the private sector on family matters intensified;

(j) All policy and programme decisions and actions at the national level have an impact on families. Subsequently, the refinement and integration of a family perspective in development efforts and a family-impact consideration in policies and programmes should be a major goal. This should lead to taking due account of the impact on families of all policies, programmes and legislation. Effective tools should be developed to gauge the impact of social change and policy measures on families and, subsequently, on the well-being of individuals;

(k) Sound knowledge and information on families is essential to ensure that policies, programmes and services are well-founded. This information should be regularly updated, in order to reflect the constantly changing realities of families and societies, and research, data collection and information exchange should receive due attention. Research and academic institutions have a central role to play in, and should provide input to, the policy development processes at all levels;

(l) Other important prerequisites for effective national action include political commitment at the highest levels, adequate resource allocation, formal infrastructures and institutional arrangements, personnel development and training. Effective measures should be taken to meet these prerequisites. Developing institutional capacities and personnel training should be given due priority;

(m) As in the case of the Year, elaboration of a long-term national plan of action on families can be a valuable measure to guide and monitor action. In elaborating such plans, the national and international experience gained through the Year and the resources of existing national and international institutions devoted to family issues should be fully utilized. In accordance with national circumstances and approaches, the plans may bring together the various family-related aspects of existing policies and impart coherence, or may promote specific policies and approaches. They may identify national and local-level measures to support families and to strengthen national capacities to deal with family issues. They may identify short-, medium- and long-term national goals, priorities and commitments as well as specific measures for achieving them. They may also establish institutional responsibilities for implementation;

(n) National experiences of the International Year of the Family have revealed numerous substantive concerns and goals for long-term action regarding families. These include:

(i) Reinforcing the interrelationship between family well-being and sustainable development, which encompass such aspects as integrating family well-being and development strategies, sustained economic growth, poverty, environmental protection;

(ii) Facilitating societal conditions that are family-friendly and supportive of families, which encompass public awareness, knowledge about families, family empowerment, family impact consideration, review and enactment of legislation, infrastructure to address family issues;

(iii) Promoting families based on partnership and democracy, which encompass the human rights of individual members of families, particularly children, women and vulnerable members, and the enjoyment and violation of those rights within families, including domestic violence, abuse and neglect; changes in family organization; equal sharing of rights and responsibilities;

(iv) Promoting family strengths and providing for family needs, which encompass supporting the societal and developmental functions of families; enabling reconciliation of family and work responsibilities; assisting families and family members in difficult circumstances;

(o) The experience of the Year also suggests that, despite the diversity of family issues and approaches, effective international action is possible and appropriate regional and international cooperation and mechanisms for that purpose can prove valuable in facilitating and supporting actions at the local and national levels. Constructive activities at the regional and international levels should be continued. They should be integrated in the ongoing programme of activities of concerned organizations. The United Nations Secretariat should play an active promotional and facilitative role in this regard;

(p) Major areas of focus for regional and international action should be the exchange of information and experience; mobilization of resources and expertise as well as provision of technical assistance, with a focus on the least developed and developing countries; and the promotion of networks and partnerships in support of families, involving collaboration at the local, national, regional and international levels;

(q) Consideration might be given to the continuation of a voluntary fund for families, to serve as a means of resource mobilization and financial assistance for specific activities that would strengthen the role of families in development and social progress, and projects of direct benefit to families, with special focus on the least developed and developing countries. Particular attention should be given to mobilizing contributions from the private sector through innovative fund-raising approaches;

(r) At the international level, consideration may be given to undertaking periodic reviews of progress made in the follow-up to the International Year of the Family and in taking long-term action regarding families.

Notes

1/ E/CN.5/1995/5.

2/ E/CN.5/1991/2.

3/ E/CN.5/1993/3.

4/ E/CN.5/1995/5.

5/ A/CONF.171/13, annex, chap. II.

6/ A/CONF.166/9, chap. I, resolution 1.

7/ See ibid., annex I, sect. C, para. 29.